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## Ambulatory Surgery Centers (ASCs) Survey Process

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Survey protocols and Interpretive Guidelines were established by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to provide guidance to personnel conducting surveys. They serve to clarify, and/or explain, the intent of the federal regulations. All surveyors are required to use this protocol in assessing compliance with requirements. The ASC survey protocols, and federal regulation set, are contained within 42 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 416, [Appendix L](#) of the CMS State Operations Manual (SOM).



The regulatory requirements are made up of ten Conditions for Coverage (CFCs) and each of these Conditions is made up of specific standards. The ASC must be in compliance with all CFC requirements (Conditions), at all times. Below is a brief description of the ASC survey. Please refer to Appendix L for detailed information regarding the ASC survey process.

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### Initial Surveys

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Initial surveys are conducted in order for an ASC to achieve Medicare Certification. Initial surveys may be conducted by the State Agency (SA) or an Accrediting Organization (AO), dependent on whether or not the ASC is seeking deemed status.

#### Initial Surveys for ASCs Not Seeking Deemed Status

At this time the SA is not performing initial surveys. Please refer to [CMS letter, S&C 08-03, dated November 5, 2007](#), for additional information.

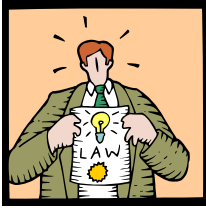
#### Initial Surveys for ASCs Seeking Deemed Status

An ASC has the option of achieving Medicare certification of the ASC, through an accrediting organization (AO), by requesting a **deemed status** survey. If an ASC successfully completes a **deemed** accreditation survey, the ASC is deemed by CMS to meet all Condition for Coverage for ASCs. Please refer to [CMS letter, S&C 08-03, dated November 5, 2007](#), for additional information.

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### Recertification & Validation Surveys

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The SA conducts unannounced recertification surveys for non-deemed providers. Unannounced validation surveys are conducted by the State Agency for deemed providers. During both the recertification and validation surveys, the SA surveyors assess the compliance of all Condition for Coverage and standard level regulations. The purpose of the validation survey is to validate the survey findings of the AO.

CMS directs the frequency and priority status of ASC recertification and validation surveys. CMS established priorities and frequencies for current FFY 2009 are as follows:

- **Priority One:** There are no Priority One designations for ASCs.
- **Priority Two:** 10% targeted sample - the State surveys 10% of the providers in the state.  
5% Validation Surveys - the State surveys 5% of the deemed providers in the state as identified by CMS.
- **Priority Three:** 7.0 year interval - additional surveys are done (beyond **Priority Two** surveys) to ensure that no more than 7.0 years elapse between surveys for any one particular ASC facility.
- **Priority Four:** 6.0 year average - additional surveys are done (beyond **Priority Two** and **Priority Three** surveys) such that all ASC providers in the state are surveyed on average, every 6.0 years.

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## Follow-up Surveys

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Follow up surveys are conducted for both deemed and non-deemed providers. The purpose of the follow-up survey is to determine that systemic corrective actions have been implemented for the deficiencies cited during the previous survey. A follow-up survey may be conducted at the facility or by phone/mail. An unannounced on-site revisit is mandated when deficiencies are cited at the Condition of Coverage level; but may be optional when cited at the standard level.

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## Complaint Surveys

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Follow up surveys are conducted for both deemed and non-deemed providers. Anyone may file allegations of provider non-compliance with regulatory requirements. The state agency is required to investigate all such allegations.

When a complaint which alleges regulatory non-compliance is received, an unannounced complaint survey is conducted which focuses on the allegations of the complaint. Please refer to [Chapter 5](#) of the SOM for more specific information regarding the complaint survey process.